

# AS/A LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE H073, H473

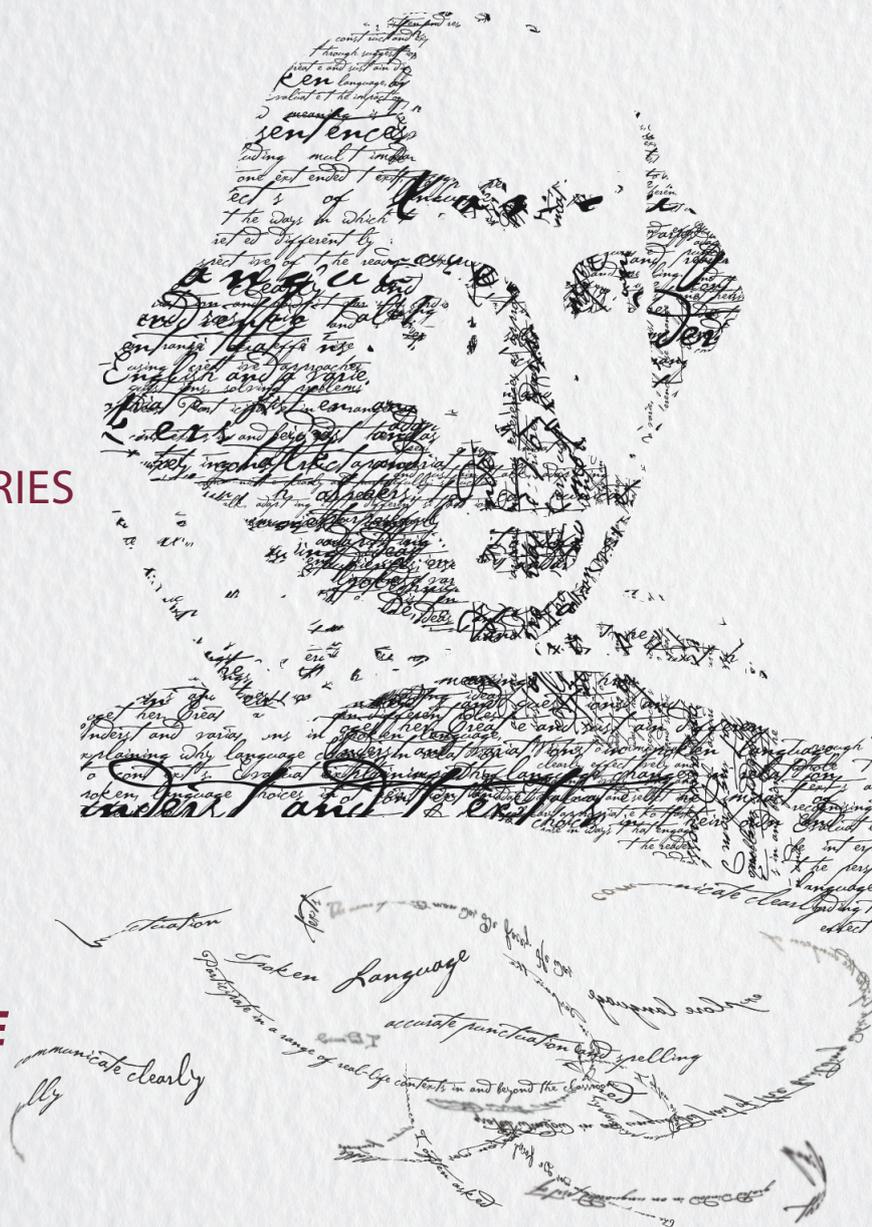
Unit F673 Dramatic Voices

## EXEMPLAR CANDIDATE ANSWERS

WITH EXAMINER COMMENTARIES

OCTOBER 2014

**BRINGING ENGLISH TO LIFE**



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# CANDIDATE 1

## MARK 26/60

Question 2: 15/30; Question 5: 11/30

### GENERAL COMMENT

This script shows a variable performance across questions and gained a secure Band 3 overall. Some relevant analysis produced a top Band 3 answer to Question 2; much more limited focus produced a low Band 3 answer to Question 5.

#### Section A, Question 2

Text pair: William Shakespeare: *As You Like It* and Tom Stoppard: *Arcadia*

By referring closely to the following two passages, examine how ideas about time are presented and explored in the two plays.

In your answer you should consider the linguistic features and dramatic effects of the voices created, using approaches from your combined literary and linguistic study.

William Shakespeare perceives time to be negative throughout *As You Like It*. Not only does he personify time as a 'he' but also uses such abstract nouns like 'lazy' to define the way he believes time is. The use of the negative connoting lexeme 'lazy' furthermore supports Shakespeare's pessimistic perception of time as it interferes with love: 'Then there is no true lover'. It could be said that this quote said by Rosalind acts as a cataphoric reference said at the very beginning of the play. The cataphoric reference creates irony to the love that develops between many in the forest.

This correlates to what was said by the Telegraph when writing about *As You Like It* and that contrasting to the little control that the natural location has, the love that develops amongst every character is relatively traditional and controlled with regards to the time the play was written.

In opposition to Shakespeare's use of verse to perceive time, Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia* gives a literal scientific definition making it seem difficult to understand and lacks meaning and emotion in the way that Shakespeare does: "It won't work backwards". Thomas Stoppard invoking such a linear view of time however contrasts with the structure of the play. Alterations from one time period to another merely enforces dramatic irony that time will in fact work backwards.

However, Shakespeare's use of verse to describe time reflects the time and audience to which he was appealing to. The comedy genre is a contribution as to why he relates the difficult matter and his personification of time as a male would have been due to male superiority at the time. Something so powerful could not be a woman.

Similarly to the unclear nature of which time is identified in *Arcadia*, Shakespeare's parallelism creates a rhythm to the way that he depicts time – the use of apostrophe 'who doth he gallops withal' could be argued as another way that time was viewed; that the parallelism represents the crucial nature of time.

The way in which Stoppard's linear and scientific view of time contrasts with the one location surrounding several periods is again further demonstrated through the anaphoric reference made by Valentine 'like a steam engine' which

would dramatically ironise the “steam train” that was used to describe Lady Croom and Count Zelinsky in the music room.

A second reference that refers to time whilst creating dramatic irony is the use of Septimus noting that “When we have...lost all meaning, we will be alone”. Referring earlier that “time is meaning” said by Valentine is a cataphoric reference to when Septimus is ‘alone’ in the hermitage. This similarly compares time and its meaning to love in the way that Shakespeare does in *As You Like It*.

## COMMENTARY

**Mark:** 15/30

This answer was placed at the top of Band 3.

Overall, the answer addressed the concepts in the keywords of the question in simplified ways. The keyword “time” was addressed but the crucial keywords “dramatic effects” and “linguistic features” were more limited in approach. Attempts to answer the specific question and meet the Assessment Objectives (AOs) for this section ranged between **limited** and **straightforward** and overall settled at **some attempts** to address the question. The argument had some organisation to its sequence of points and ideas but was more successful when answering on Passage B/*Arcadia*.

The answer immediately attempts to show how Shakespeare perceives time through the use of language in Passage A. While the expression is adequate at best and some references are rather limited in approach, there is a hard-working and clear intention to analyse dramatic effects and linguistic features, if shakily executed. A real effort is made to separate character from the originator of the dialogue. By contrast, the contextual reference to the ‘Telegraph’ is clearly limited.

A more competent approach and argument is offered on Stoppard’s play in response to Passage B. Some commentary on complex “ideas about time” demonstrates a straightforward grasp of how the question focus relates to the passage and the over-arching structure of the play.

The return to *As You Like It* is characterised by general comments on social and literary contexts of comedy and verse to little effect with a partial grasp of literary technique tagged on the end. The return to *Arcadia* is more successful; considered through the ways in which time periods and dramatic irony in the wider play apply to examples of structure and dialogue in the passage.

The answer ends without conclusion.

In parallel with the commentary above, see below an extract from the June 2014 Report on the examination:

2. Some candidates demonstrated:

- a sound exploration of the ways in which ideas about time steer the interactions of characters in both extracts
- some misunderstanding of conversational dominance in extract A *As You Like It*
- simplistic address of the changeability of time in extract B/*Arcadia* with only a partial understanding of the forest as timeless in the former and the end of time in the latter.

**Section B, Question 5**

Examine ways in which documents, poems and letters are used in one of your chosen plays.

Support your answer by close reference to those features of language, dramatic action and context which you have found most significant in your study

Thomas Stoppard presents documents, poems and letters consistently throughout his play and reinforces the classicist genre of which it is identified as. The documents and letters are what link the two time periods throughout the play and consistently enforce dramatic irony upon the audience. 'Fucked by a dahlia' said Bernard in the final part of the play demonstrates the way that documents and in this case, the letter to Septimus from Mr Chater enforce the discovery of history. The way in which there is scientific discovery through these documents however contrasts to the reason to the letters coming out. Bernard discovering the letter that lead him to being 'fucked by a dahlia' arose as a result of the madness and misodjenty of Mrs Chater. The use of the taboo language 'fucked' further enforces dramatic irony as well as acting as an anaphoric reference to Septimus 'insulting' Mr Charter's 'Wife in the gazebo'. Stoppard presents a scientific explanation for the chaos that actually happened and this is antithesis or furthermore a juxtaposition of realities.

This idea that Stoppard presents was depicted by a literary critic in the Telegraph that noted the way that the garden of the house and the science in the regency period was so controlled and so many rules applied, contrasts to the chaos such as 'the perpendicular poke' in the gazebo that realistically happened. Such antithesis would have acted well to Stoppard's audience at the time and further added to the many contrasts to the classicist play.

Stoppard differentiates letters for two purposes throughout the play: either to fight with one other or to have sex with another. The letters are used to define the relationship between the sender and recipient: such as Septimus' individual letters to Thomasina and Lady Croom.

Stoppard avoids the use of poems in this perhaps for the reason that the entire play bases itself upon science: "This is not science, this is storytelling". The play further involving no love and just the sin of lust could identify the depletion of the traditionally romantic poems.

## COMMENTARY

**Mark:** 11/30

The answer was overall a limited response, seeming to end prematurely and rather abruptly in a somewhat cryptic conclusion. There is, however, enough grasp of the task to merit a band 3 mark for “some” understanding.

The first page of the response shows some grasp of the role of “documents, poems and letters” in the structure and the dramatic irony of the play. The answer shows some understanding of the way in which specific, named examples of episodes and dialogue depend on a revelation or refutation in one of the stage props in the above keywords of the question.

The examples are brief but relevant and show some awareness of how the props are embedded in the plot, relationships, structures and time periods across the play.

The answer peters out in a limited and unclear conclusion.

In parallel with the commentary above, see below an extract from the June 2014 Report on the examination:

5. Some candidates demonstrated:

- a sustained exploration of documents, and/or poems and/or letters in either play
- a sound grasp of the role of the lovers and Touchstone in *As You Like It*
- an exploration of the themes and motifs or /and contexts of love, pastoral, parody and resolution in the written props of *As You Like It*
- a grasp of the role of forgotten/lost/mistaken knowledge and/or concepts of Romanticism and The Enlightenment in *Arcadia*
- the relevance of merging and separating time periods in the written props of *Arcadia*
- a simplistic commentary on the poems in the forest in *As You Like It*
- over-complicated and tangential narratives on entropy or/and narratives on the plot implications of documents in *Arcadia*.

# CANDIDATE 2

## MARK 45/60

Question 3: 22/30; Question 6: 23/30

### GENERAL COMMENT

This script shows a consistent performance across questions and gained a secure Band 5 overall. Some development of analysis was evident but this was not always sustained.

#### Section A, Question 3

Text pair: Thomas Middleton/Cyril Tournier: *The Revenger's Tragedy* and Martin McDonagh: *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*

By referring closely to the following two passages, examine the dramatic presentation of attitudes to violence in the two plays.

In your answer you should consider the linguistic features and dramatic effects of the voices created, using approaches from your combined literary and linguistic study.

The moral attitudes to violence are displayed in both plays, in context to their respective periods. In *The Revenger's Tragedy*, violence is key to the storyline of the play, as it takes the form of a Senecan tragedy; the revenger seeks to avenge the death of a lost love and, on an older, evil man with power. Passage A is therefore the climax of the play; the audience has been waiting for Vindice to act his revenge for the entirety of the play, and it has now come to pass. An important quote for this dramatic presentation is "When the bad bleeds, then is the tragedy good", as it suggests to the audience that murder and violence is acceptable, as long as it happens to "bad" people. The half-rhyme between this and the previous line (ending in "blood") helps to convey greater conviction to this justification; the audience sees a dramatic presentation of the morality and justification behind attitudes to violence. In context, this is important as in the 17th Century, and around the time the play was written, society deemed revenge to be immoral, unless justice had not taken its due course. An audience of the period would also be aware of the corrupt court of King James I, therefore this is not only a dramatic presentation of the attitudes towards morality behind violence, but also a comment on the King and the court at the time. A modern audience would see this as a justification of the unjustifiable; violence is rarely considered acceptable in the modern era, although vengeance is a part of human nature, thus Vindice acts as a scapegoat for our morality and thoughts, creating a sense of catharsis over the theme of attitudes to violence. The quote "'Tis I, tis Vindice, 'tis I" displays Vindice's pride, and his taking of all blame regarding violence. Catharsis is not, however, as prominent in the *Lieutenant of Inishmore*, however the question of morality behind attitudes to violence is still presented, only in a far more gory manner. The *Lieutenant* has been named a 'microcosm' for the world, mainly in regards to political violence and extremism, and the morality (or lack of) behind it. Therefore the happenings on stage can often be allegorically interpreted to symbolise far more than what is plainly visible. Mairead says "I thought shooting fellas would be fun, but it's not. It's dull", displaying the glorification of violence by the Irish terrorist movement, but also questioning the motives behind violence; Mairead has killed people because she thought it "would be fun". This questions the motives behind the Irish terrorist movement, and displays violence as a boring feature on stage, which is incongruous and absurd in the context of most plays, however is even more so with this play,

as the violence is so intense, graphic and common that in its first performances with the Royal Shakespeare company some of the crowd was seen vomiting and retching by this scene. This statement is furthered later as Mairead goes on to say "Be getting on with your chopping you two", which appears flippant and uncaring towards the carnage and mess on stage; this is an example of absurdism playing a role in the dramatic presentation of violence. The usage of Hiberno-English throughout the extract also conveys a lack of intelligence from the characters, such as 'cos it's a fecking Lieutenant ye're talking to now'. The Hiberno-English used in this statement, alongside the noun Lieutenant helps to devalue the statement, and display the stupidity behind the terrorist's self-appointment of positions of power.

Both plays also display attitudes to violence dramatically on stage through comedy. The dialogue between Vindice, Hippolito and the Duke at the beginning of passage A acts as a comedic exchange on stage; "Duke: my teeth are eaten out..Duke: oh my tongue!" (lines 1 to 5). This is an example of stichomythia; a short, sharp exchange between the three men which increases the pace and drama of the situation, and yet, despite the Duke's clear agony, Vindice and Hippolito continue to mock him in quite a playful manner, "Vindice: Then those that did eat are eaten". This joke during a scene of murder and death is incongruous, and creates comedy to the audience; this is known as black comedy. Horrid laughter is also created by statements such as "Is not thy tongue eaten out yet?" which acts as comic relief for the audience; to the horrors they are witnessing on stage. This is furthered just after this passage as the men shout "Treason! Treason! Treason!" while stamping on The Duke, as if to mock his death even more, and in the subsequent discussion. Vindice states "as fast as they peep up, we'll cut 'em down", likening the act of taking an entire court to an attraction that was common at a fair of the period, thus increasing the comedic impact on the audience. The Lieutenant of Inishmore has often been named a black comedy and a farse by genre, as well as a parody revenge tragedy. The attitudes towards violence in the play act as comedic relief to the audience, who are bombarded with scenes of horror and gore, like in passage B. An important paralinguistic feature (or stage action) in this passage is Danny's (waving a hand at the carnage), as it deflates the importance of what is visible on stage, reacting to it with only the wave of a hand. This comments on the reactions of terrorist groups in Ireland through the 1980s and 90s, to their horrific violence, and depicts their attitudes to violence as absurd. In addition to this "Danny and Davey tut" is another bathetic reaction to being told to "hack off" the body parts of dead men, and this attitude towards violence furthers the comedic impact to the audience. It is important to note that McDonagh's presentation of attitudes to violence in *The Lieutenant* became even more important after the September 11th attacks on the Twin towers, as the idea that it was a microcosm for political violence everywhere was seen as important (the play was subsequently translated into 28 languages after 9/11).

## COMMENTARY

**Mark:** 22/30

This answer is a lower Band 5 response and is **typified** by a **very competent** approach to secure a top band 4 mark with **enough development** to lift it to the lower end of Band 5.

The answer begins by focusing on how “attitudes to violence” are contextualised in Passage A/*The Revenger’s Tragedy* with a clear reference to the literary context (AO3) of Senecan revenge tragedy and the application of its features to the play.

This is followed by a competent address of how dramatic tension is created (AO2) linked to the context of audience reception (AO3).

The answer then begins to address language and metrical features at a competent level. It goes on to consider the relevant historical and social contexts of class in the play and how they impact on Passage A through the presentations of the Duke and Vindice in relation to contemporary attitudes to the court of James I.

The answer returns to the influence of literary context as a way to introduce Passage B/*he Lieutenant of Inishmore* after a summary comparison with Passage A.

A similar structure follows within the relevant argument on Passage B: introduction of literary context of staged/on-stage violence; competent address of language; application of social and historical contexts of how Irish terrorist groups are presented and perceived. Literary contexts of Absurdism are referenced within Passage B with competent links to audience receptions of a witnessed RSC production of the play.

Competent links between the passages and the rest of the play are made, supporting ideas with relevant episodes and text examples.

Tone is addressed by comparing how each passage creates comedy through straightforward references to the use of jokes, mockery, horrid laughter, farce and satire.

Paralinguistic features of Passage B are competently address and linked to commonly-held social attitudes to acts of violence by Irish terrorist groups.

The answer lacked a conclusion, ending with general links to post-9/11 attitudes to the issues of violence explored in McDonagh’s play as a whole.

The chief asset of the answer was its focus on the question and consistently competent, sometimes developed address of the keywords: “attitudes to violence” and “presented” in relation to both passages.

In parallel with the commentary above, see below an extract from the June 2014 Report on the examination:

3. Some candidates demonstrated:

- a developed focus on how language is used to create or discuss attitudes to violence with the extracts as a substantial starting point”

and

### Assessment Objective 3

There was a pleasing grasp of relevant literary contexts across all the texts and an increased awareness of useful social and political contexts in many responses.

### Section B, Question 5

Text pair: Thomas Middleton/Cyril Tournier: *The Revenger's Tragedy* and Martin McDonagh: *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*

*Examine ways in which comic elements are used in one of your chosen plays.*

Support your answer by close reference to those features of language, dramatic action and context which you have found most significant in your study of this play.

The Lieutenant of Inishmore is ridden with comedic elements, as it has been classed as a "Black Comedy" that is "Monty Python-esque" by the guardian, Monty Python being a well known comedy: McDonagh uses blood and gore not only to shock the audience and convey the message that violence is fundamentally wrong, but to increase the comedic impact of the play. Setting and special effects are of upmost importance to this presentation of gore, as scenes often open to a display of gore; scene 1 starts with "a table, centre stage, on which lies a dead cat, its head half missing". This is furthered when Donny lifts the cat up and "bits of brain plop out". There is juxtaposition here in the stage directions; the idea that brain matter would "plop" out appears farsical, and humorous in the context of a black comedy. This is also the audiences first impression of the play, and the majority of productions have an extended silence to increase the humorous of this, and also of Davey saying "Do you think he's dead, Donny?"; a completely absurd statement as the cat is clearly dead, acting on comic relief for what the audience sees on stage. Blood, gore and horrid laughter continues as a key theme throughout the play, until the climax with Brendan, Christy and Joey turning up and the subsequent shootout. It is this that gives The Lieutenant the recognition as a parody revenge tragedy, as revenge tragedies often reach a second climax where there is extensive death and violence displayed on stage such as in The Revenger's Tragedy and Hamlet. The special effects in this situation are crucial, as the play needs the extensive levels of blood to increase the comedic impact; The Chicago Theatre had blood spurt all over Mairead and the crowd when she shoots Padriac in the head, for example. This heightens the horrid laughter throughout the play. The fact that the characters appear to find the gore as so normal is also incongruous and creates comedy; "[Mairead] wearing a pretty dress, sits beside him on a bloody corpse" is an example of this. This is the only scene in which Mairead is wearing something feminine, as she tries to impress Padriac, yet she is still perfectly comfortable to sit on a bloody corpse as if it were a legitimate chair, creating humour.

This leads on to the point that the Lieutenant of Inishmore is a satire, with its main satirical device being absurdity. Absurdism is displayed throughout the play in many circumstances, for one the value of family members; when asked why he trampled on his mother, Donny replies "Ah she'd get on me nerves". This is hugely absurd to a modern audience, as no normal person would trample their mother for any reason, especially not for them getting on their nerves. This inflated response creates horrid laughter, or laughter at the absurdity. Furthermore it is contrary to the traditional belief that Ireland is full of big, somewhat gang-like families, as the bond between mother and son is broken by one "getting on the nerves" of the other. This once again comments on the motives of political terrorists, especially the IRA and INLA. This is furthered by Padriac reasoning for bombing chip shops "because chip shops aren't as well guarded as army barracks", suggesting there is a futility and pointlessness to the Irish terrorist movement, with warped motives and values, while also being absurd and having a comedic impact on the audience.

Comic elements, and satire, are also displayed in the relationships between the characters in the play. Donny and Davey act as a comedy duo, similar to Tony and Sid from Hancock's Half-hour, and the likes. The two men constantly argue, then cooperate with little structure, and are often quite foolish, creating farce. Not only is this seen when they are covering a cat with shoe polish, it is seen as Padriac has a gun to either of their heads: "Padriac: Wee Thomas is now dead. Them's the only facts this tribunal needs" to which the two men reply "What tribunal?" and "them facts are only circumstantial". In this situation it is unlikely that the majority of people would be trying to undermine the aggressor's statements, rather they would reason with him, however there those simply, foolishly, undermine what Padriac has to do say in a farsical manner, that also displays their 'comedy duo' relationship through their cooperation. Farce is also

displayed by the stage actions and creates humour, Padriac says "Ye've killed me cat you've risked me life, for what I've got to live for now I do not know" to which Davey replies "You could get another cat", provoking Padriac to respond "Padriac hits Davey with the butt of his gun". Once again the audience sees Davey undermine Padriac, playing the 'wise fool' character, which is humorous, but this comedic impact is furthered by Padriac aggressive (but not extremely so) response. Farsical violence like this is also comedic relief for the audience; as it is far less extensive than the violence they have, and are just about to witness.

Violence and morality as a comic element plays another important role contextually. The play affects the audience's moral compass, as it discusses the desensitisation to violence, not only by the characters response to violence, but by the audiences' response to it. Groups that have dared to perform the play always expect complaints about the level of violence in the play, yet it is not dissimilar to a Quentin Tarantino movie, which it has often been likened to. This is because theatre is regarded as a more personal experience as you see the people act out the events in front of you, and empathise with them in a different way to you would on a screen. This therefore questions what is right and wrong to be displayed on stage, as the comic elements in the play are often quite brutal and savage, and reference real issues, such as Padriac's dismissal of the Guildford 4 "Ah feck the Guildford four, even if they didn't do it they should have took the blame and been proud". This was a tender subject at the time, and critics or IRA sympathisers often saw the play as morally wrong, or unfair, thus the comic elements have not always been perceived as funny, but also as a much harsher statement on society and Irish terrorism as a whole.

## COMMENTARY

**Mark:** 23/30

The answer began by establishing the **comedic effects** of setting with the examination of stage directions in the context of the chosen play, *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*. This was followed by a **developed** analysis of how the dramatic voices are created by the juxtaposition of subject matter, stage directions, dialogue and contexts of Absurdism where Donny and Davey interact with the dead cat on the table.

There was some analysis of the use of comic relief in the chosen episode with wider links made to its use in the play and how this particular dramatic feature drives the play to its climactic shoot-out.

The parody of revenge tragedy as a genre is addressed in a **straightforward** way through comments on the use of special effects and stage blood in a named production. There is a straightforward grasp of how the incongruity of the setting and the dialogue create satire within the play.

There is a **developed** understanding of how comedy is created through the characterisation of Donny and Davey as a comedy duo through a developed analysis of how film, radio and TV comedy duos have influenced the presentation of these characters and the ways in which their dialogue and relationship creates comedy in the play. Useful citations include Hancock's Half Hour and Tarantino.

The strengths of the answer were in a clear knowledge of the play and its contextual factors, complemented by a grasp of the dramatic construct and some development of ideas. This secured its place in Band 5.

In parallel with the commentary above, see below an extract from the June 2014 Report on the examination:

6. Some candidates demonstrated:

- an open exploration of comic elements in either play
- a sound grasp of the macabre, comic relief, horrid laughter as part of Jacobean dramatic conventions in *The Revenger's Tragedy*
- a sound grasp of the contextual influence of parody, Absurdism and/or violent gangster film sub-genres in *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*."

# CANDIDATE 3

## MARK 36/60

Question 1: 16/30; Question 4: 20/30

### GENERAL COMMENT

This script shows a variable performance across questions and gained a secure Band 4 overall. Competent support and grasp of genre produced a top Band 4 answer to Question 4; some grasp of genre and authorial method with more limited textual support produced a low Band 4 answer to Question 1. This variation is not untypical for mid mark range responses such as this one.

#### Section A, Question 1.

Text Pair: Ben Johnson: *Volpone* and David Mamet: *Glengarry Glen Ross*

By referring closely to the following two passages, examine the dramatic presentation of deception in the two plays.

In your answer you should consider the linguistic features and dramatic effects of the voices created, using approaches from your combined literary and linguistic study.

Both '*Glengarry Glen Ross*' and '*Volpone*' display numerous examples of layered deception. However, it is only really justified in GGR, as the characters are desperate in their situation. In '*Volpone*', they are deceptive because they have become corrupted by wealth.

Firstly, both Roma and Volpone – debatably the protagonists, although this changes – require someone else for their deception to be effective. Roma relies on Levene, the weakest salesman. His continual encouragement to Levene throughout has built his confidence, enabling him to play this role for Roma. Compliments such as 'like you taught me' have enabled Roma to create a close bond with his colleague, meaning he will agree to deceive Lingk. Second person pronoun 'you' is direct and personal, comparing it to first person pronoun 'me' – by giving this example of something they share, Levene is instantly made to feel successful, as Roma is the best salesman. Therefore, as soon as Roma gives the imperative 'you're a client', Levene almost has no choice but to agree. This structurally shows the importance of carefully building relationships for personal gain in the industry. However, Levene is merely used as a tool, as Roma carries out the best deception. His utterances are far larger, and he takes control of the conversation with Lingk, Roma does not only use this deception, as his gradual manipulation of Levene also has a more sinister purpose. As the play nears the resolution and Levene has just agreed to a sharing deal with Roma, Roma instructs Williamson 'everything he makes, I get half' – demonstrates the true nature of the 'every man for himself' attitude of eighties America. It is important to understand how Roma can't afford to be much more moral, as sales and wealth determine his survival. However, Volpone chooses to be deceptive and immoral to gain his wealth – he doesn't depend on it.

The character Volpone employs to carry out his deception is Mosca, his servant. This dynamic contrasts with GGR in that

Mosca is the intelligent one of the two, carrying out their plans and creating them. This is demonstrated by Volpone not even being present in the extract – he trusts Mosca to carry this out for him. Mosca's deception is presented multiple times even within the extracts for example when he tells Corbaccio that Bonario "entered our house", and was "touching your will". These extensive lies appear hyperbolic, and despite the audience knowing little of Bonario at this point, the melodrama Mosca uses is an almost obvious indicator of his deception. Possessive pronouns "our" and "your" give power to those they are referring to, implying Mosca owns Volpone's house too, and that Corbaccio owns his will and shouldn't let anyone else have contact with it – despite Bonario presumably being the heir anyway. It is likely that Johnson deliberately over-exaggerated this view of Venice and deception for wealth within a society, as he was aiming to shock the audience into realising just how corrupt people could become if they used deception to this extent. This could be seen as his didactic message.

The characters of both plays are ultimately deceived by the system they are controlled by. In GGR, there is a strong sense of the Capitalist society of the time it was set. The characters are used as ciphers in the microcosm of capitalism presented. For example, when Levene has convinced himself that by stealing the leads, he can avoid prison by making a deal with Williamson. After pleading with him, Levene gives the declarative "I wasn't born a thief. I was born for a salesman". This portrays how the harsh Capitalist economy has effectively deceived him into believing he could be a thief, before making this realisation. Common nouns 'thief' and 'salesman' are two job titles that could be seen to merge into one considering the Capitalist culture. Mamet once said that the 'small guys' in the system usually get caught as the thieves, such as salesmen, and the worst criminals go unnoticed. This could be Mitch and Murray who set up the extreme competition, or those in Reagan's government who decided on such an economy. The layers of deception within this system trap all that attempt, or are forced to be a part of it.

Furthermore, in 'Volpone', the characters are deceived by the system of mercantile trading, and the strong hierarchy. Corbaccio is deceived by Mosca into giving up his wealth – "here is the will". This is parallelism of later in the play, when Volpone says to Mosca "Hold, here is my will". It presents how the system (and Mosca) manage to trick the wealthy into giving up their wealth. This could be due to their desperation to raise themselves in the hierarchy, despite not being in any position of poverty, unlike GGR. They are also deceived by the emerging early Capitalism – the system of mercantile trading which focused on amassing wealth in the form of gold and possessions which defined success.

Another example is when Volpone believes he has been deceived by Mosca, with the utterance "put not your foists upon me, I shall scent 'em". This creates dramatic irony, as the audience are aware that Mosca has deceived him, but by the end of the scene he has still been deceived back into believing he will be heir. 'Foists' refers to tricks, but the whole utterance links to the animalism of the play – suggesting Mosca's parasitic scent can be described – the smell of feeding off others.

Overall, both plays utilise deception in great amounts, but it is clear throughout that in 'Volpone' it is based on the characters immense greed, instead of a desire for survival.

## COMMENTARY

**Mark:** 16/30

This answer was placed at the Band 4 boundary.

Overall, the answer addressed the concept of “deception” in straightforward ways. This keyword was consistently addressed in relation to the passages but the crucial keywords “dramatic presentation” and “dramatic effects” were considered at a very general level. This general, more limited, treatment of genre and authorial methods also applied to the treatment of the passages from which quoted examples, for otherwise competent points, was rarely offered. The disparity between how the candidate addresses AO1 and AOs 2-3 overall determines the borderline quality of the response.

The answer began with a general introduction of how “deception” operates differently in the two plays and passages. This was followed by a straightforward response to Passage B, with reference to how Roma is able to engage Levene in the deception of Linkt through Roma’s earlier deception of Levene. This potentially competent approach to how manipulation works in the passage and in Roma’s hands was not sustained as it moved into a more limited discussion of how personal pronouns are used in a specific utterance outside of the passage.

The return to the passage is characterised by the straightforward address of linguistic features, vis-à-vis Roma’s direction of and dominance in the dialogue, but no examples are offered to validate the argument or analysis. When an example of dialogue is offered, making some implicit links across the play, the quotation does not relate to nor illuminate “deception” in Passage B.

The answer then moved to address Passage A/Volpone. This section argues the presentation of “deception” in Passage A more closely than it had on Passage B. The examination of how personal pronouns are used is more competently addressed in this passage. A general awareness of Jonson and his didactic message shows some awareness of dramatic presentation and contextual influences on the play and the passage.

The answer returns to Passage B and Glengarry Glen Ross with some understanding of how capitalist contexts have influenced the play. The discussion of mercantilism shifts to Volpone with some closely linked, straightforward examples offered from passage A. This discussion becomes more generalised and the response ends with a general conclusion on “deception” in the plays.

In parallel with the commentary above, see below an extract from the June 2014 Report on the examination:

Successful responses included one or more of the following:

- focused and developed response to question
- clarity in communicating ideas
- sustained and accurate language analysis
- sustained exploration of literary text
- sustained use of textual/contextual/stylistic/genre-specific evidence
- relevant material, especially contextual (often literary).

## Section B, Question 4

Text Pair: Ben Jonson: *Volpone* and David Mamet: *Glengarry Glen Ross*

Examine the dramatic presentation and significance of greed in one of your chosen plays.

Greed is present in multiple examples in 'Volpone'. It ultimately corrupts the characters, deceiving them into doing dangerous, immoral and unkind activities.

Their greed could be determined by religion. There is a stark contrast between those who believe – Celia & Bonario – and the others who don't. The two innocent characters continually reference God, worshipping him in every situation. When Celia is in danger, she uses the exclamatory "O heaven!" when she is in court, she states her witness as "Heaven, that never failed the innocent". Abstract noun 'Heaven' can not be physically felt or touched as a being, making her seem vulnerable compared to the other side's witnesses – physical beings like Lady WB. Contrastingly, Volpone has attempted to create his own religion out of wealth. From the beginning in Act 1, Scene 1, he kept his gold protected more than anything else – "open the shrine so that I may see my saint". The religious imagery used here and throughout the scene suggests wealth is something he worships, referring to the 'celestial ram' among others. Active verbs "open" and "see" imply the shrine requires constant attention and work for Volpone to worship it, and that he dedicates extensive effort to it. Furthermore, the sub-plot mirrors this greed and lack of religion contributing to being corrupted by it. In the court, Mosca tells Volpone that Lady Would-be is another witness – "to give worship to your name". Again, this suggests God is being replaced, this time implying Volpone is the God of his new wealth religion, as he is being worshipped. The referential utterance is designed to encourage Volpone that the court case can be won, however in the denouement the extent of their greed is fully established. Here, Celia and Bonario's devout belief in God proves beneficial, as they are given freedom and justice. However, Volpone announces the truth to avoid losing his fortune. "I am Volpone, and this is my knave". Therefore, his greed results in their imprisonment, and punishments based on poetic justice. The address terms also portray their power roles.

It suggests greed stems from a lack of relationship with God, perhaps this was Jonson's intention – to teach the audience about the importance of religion. It could be a feature of neoclassical theatre, where one intention is to give a message from the Church in the form of a play. Alternatively, it could be intended to show the effect of the Renaissance, and how people began to become secular, many believing humanism was the way forward. However, as a newly converted Catholic himself, this could be his message that believing in God is necessary to avoid corruption from factors such as greed.

The characters of 'Volpone' depend on greed as part of their feeding relationships with each other. The most obvious being Mosca and Volpone, who both depend on each other for survival. This reflects their names – 'Mosca' meaning a parasite or fly in Italian, and 'Volpone' a fox. It suggests to the more educated audience that this will match their characteristics – feeding off others for survival and being cunning and devious for survival. Therefore they are given an early impression of what to expect. These antonyms make sense in the context of Volpone telling Mosca "take of my hand". By giving him money, Volpone is unwillingly allowing Mosca to feed off him. The instrumental language function is one of many examples where Volpone provides Mosca with something, but ultimately he is aiming for the biggest prize there is – the inheritance. This highlights how essential greed is to the characters, maintaining their places. Volpone praises Mosca with respectful, adoring address terms such as "dear Mosca", often verging on using upward convergence, despite him being the master. It demonstrates how Volpone needs Mosca in equal amounts. It is interesting to observe the role reversal concerning power – it alternates between the two, with Mosca becoming gradually more powerful.

Mosca and the legacy hunters also depend on each other, increasing their greed. For example with Corvino, he relies on Mosca fully for the inheritance so has to treat him with respect. At one point he offends Mosca, forced to reverse this by describing Mosca as “my companion, my partner, my friend” – the possessive pronoun ‘my’ still giving the impression he has power. Mosca’s greed is also increased by Corvino’s wealth – “I brought a pear” – making Mosca increasingly greedy for the wealth of all the legacy hunters and Volpone combined.

In summary, greed is used frequently throughout ‘Volpone’ to demonstrate the corruption caused by it, and factors such as religion, as well as the system of mercantile trading. These factors gave characters the desire to crave more wealth, ultimately giving the audience the didactic message that greed is a sin, and should be avoided at all costs.

## COMMENTARY

**Mark:** 20/30

This answer gained a top Band 4.

The answer began with a demonstration of how “greed” is a corrupting force and is linked to religion throughout the play *Volpone*. This is followed by a very competent grasp of how the innocent character of Celia and Bonario are presented as almost exempt from the corruption of greed through their Christian attitudes and behaviours. This develops into the contrasting presentation of the character of Volpone who is so consumed by greed it appears to operate as his religion. The argument is supported throughout by relevant textual reference and some linguistic analysis.

Some reference is made to how contemporary social and biographical contexts influence the presentation of greed in the play. The answer goes on to analyse how greed determines the relationship between Volpone and Mosca with some straightforward analysis of the animal imagery in the play and some discussion of how Volpone’s language shows the parasitic communication between the two characters.

The answer ends rather prematurely and does not go on to develop an analysis the interesting ideas it began as outlined above.

In parallel with the commentary above, see below an extract from the June 2014 Report on the examination:

4. Some candidates demonstrated:

- a sound grasp of the moral and social nature of greed in either play
- the links between ‘talking and speaking’ in GGR or the links between motivation, greed, desire and corruption in *Volpone*
- grasp of (often) literary contexts in *Volpone* and (often) socio-economic contexts in GGR.



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